

This month's newsletter has something for everyone. If your kids are planning on taking up an instrument this year, learn about our back-to-school instrument rental program where you can try it before you buy it. Also read our interview with music superstar Nathaniel Rateliff! He tells us how he got his start, how it feels to return to playing live music and the instrument that frustrates him the most. And Amos Helvey takes our 2008 Guild D-55 on a test drive on our YouTube Channel. Then see our profile of local musician and music teacher Bret Billings. This and more, so let's get scrolling!



Friends of the Folklore Center: Nathaniel Rateliff

Music superstar and Friend of the Folklore Center, Nathaniel Rateliff recently took some time during his busy touring schedule to speak with us about his career, musical influences and what it's like to perform for live audiences again.

Nathaniel and his friend (Night Sweats' bassist) Joseph Pope "moved to Denver in 1998 from Missouri, so I've been in Denver for more than half my life." It wasn't long after that he found out about the Folklore Center.

"I heard about the early days of Bob Dylan and people coming through town, so I was always very curious about that. At one point I thought I was going to take fiddle lessons and I still have yet to."

I was kind of caught between what I had cut my teeth on, which was old Muddy Waters' records that my dad had handed down to me, and Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen. I was also a big fan of the Allman Brothers."

Nathaniel is thrilled to be back on tour and says "it feels fantastic to be playing for live audiences again. I think it was 395 days since the last Night Sweats' show, which was prior to our little run up to the Newport folk festival and some dates surrounding that. Then I had put out "And It's Still Alright", so most of the guys in the band were in that band as well."

"We were still making music together just not as the Night Sweats. Newport was interesting because we

Musically, Nathaniel began as a drummer, later learning to play the guitar, and his musical tastes were largely impacted by the music of the '60s and '70s. When he moved to Denver his musical influences were all over the place.

played both projects, so I was trying to memorize and remember all the Night Sweats' songs I hadn't sang in over a year and then also make sure I'm not screwing up the other record we were performing which has more subtlety. I had to remember at least 40 songs. It was fun."

Read the rest of our interview with Nathaniel Rateliff [HERE](#).



Try It Before You Buy It

Are your kids thinking about taking up an instrument this school year? Selecting and purchasing a new musical instrument can be a daunting process. But not at the DFC! We make it easy to try out a musical instrument before you buy it with our simple rental program.

The rental option gives your child the time and freedom to learn the instrument and decide if it's right for them before you spend your hard-earned dollars. Our rental program applies to acoustic [guitars](#), [banjos](#), [mandolins](#), [dulcimers](#) and violins. And while renting, you accumulate credit towards the purchase of an instrument. Learn more about how our instrument rental program works [HERE](#).



Get Loud with a Resonator Guitar!

Resonator guitars combine wood and metal to produce a distinct look and sound. Not only is this guitar louder than an acoustic, its unique tone makes it stand out when playing with other musical instruments. For guitar players, the transition to a round-neck resonator can be quite smooth, as the feel of the neck is similar and the tuning is the same as an acoustic guitar. Square-neck resonators are tuned differently and are played horizontally with picks and a steel bar.

Whatever your preference, our selection of resonator guitars by brands like Recording King, Regal and Dobro is sure to please the most discerning player. See them all [HERE](#).



What People Are Saying About Us

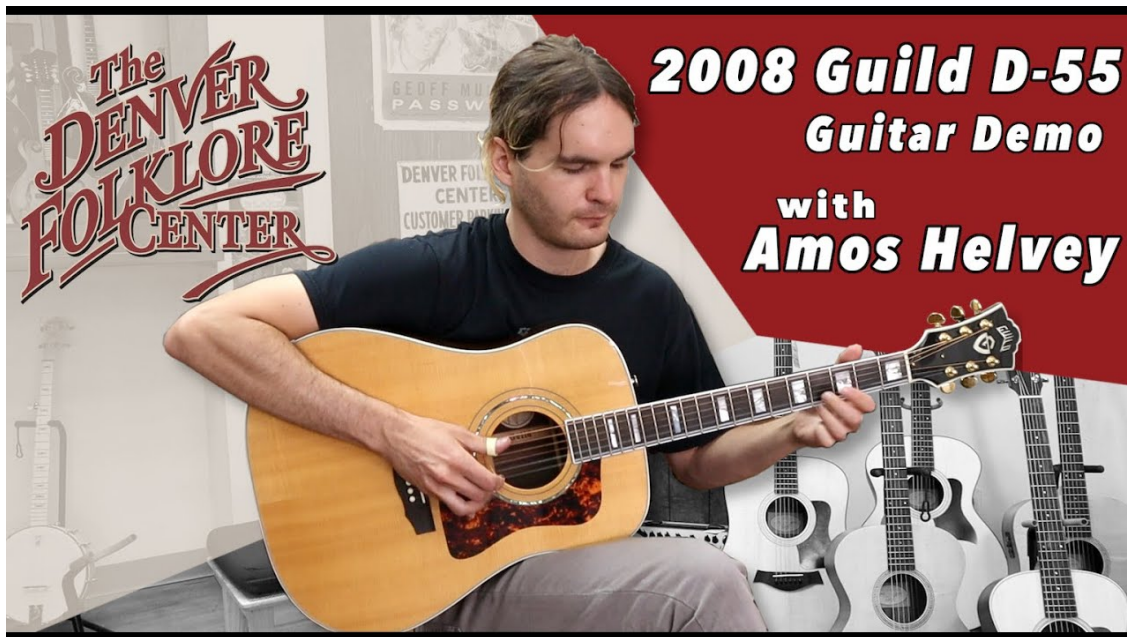
"I brought an unusual stringed instrument in for help (a cura saz from Turkey) and John Rumley helped me re-string and figure out how to manage some of the quirky aspects of the instrument. Nice bunch of folks at the store.

I will be back. Thanks John!" - Ed



Happy Birthday, Bill Monroe

Bluegrass legend Bill Monroe was born in September of 1911. He was an American mandolinist, singer and songwriter who created the bluegrass music genre (the genre takes its name from his band, the Blue Grass Boys, who named their group for the bluegrass of Monroe's home state of Kentucky). Because of this, he is often called the "Father of Bluegrass". Monroe's performing career spanned 69 years as a singer, instrumentalist, composer and bandleader. Learn more about Bill Monroe [HERE](#).



2008 Guild D-55 Guitar Demo with Amos Helvey

Tacoma-era Guilds are highly regarded guitars, standing up to high-end Martins and Gibsons of the same era, and this 2008 Guild D-55 certainly lives up to those high expectations. Watch Amos Helvey from Flaming Tongues Above take this great guitar out for a test drive on our [YouTube Channel](#). And don't forget to subscribe while you're there!



Music Teacher Spotlight - Bret Billings

Bret Billings is a musician who has In his tweens he “got into classical

played locally and regionally in Colorado since 1977 with the Desperados, Kenny Brent and the Texas Express, Briar Rose, the Red Eye Band and Halden Wofford and the Hi*Beams.

He's also been teaching harmonica throughout most of his career. But it was about twelve years ago that Clay Kirkland (a long-time harmonica teacher at Swallow Hill Music) approached him to be a sub for his classes. "I did that for about two years, then Swallow Hill approached me to teach my own classes. They also knew I played dobro, so I've taught both this whole time."

He began playing music at nine years old when his mom gave him a guitar. He took group classes and later private lessons.

guitar and took lessons for two years (in Westminster – Bret is a Colorado Native). Then I started taking electric guitar lessons and the teacher (Colorado legend "[Uncle" Dick Meis](#)) was a pedal steel guitar player, so that's how I discovered pedal steel."

After that he "basically bailed on the classical guitar" and focused on the pedal steel guitar and country music, much to his mother's dismay (she was hoping for a more classical approach). After taking lessons from Meis for a year, he began self-teaching. Read more about Bret [HERE](#).

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